

Ott, Drugless Physician," and that at the time of Ott's arrest there were found in his possession "so many different packages of herbs, powders, pills, tablets, liquid medicines, etc., that we took only a small part of them into court. . . . His record book shows that some of his patients had 'indigestin.'"

Special Agent Henderson reports Walter N. Thompson (whose name is not listed as licensed in the United States), complained of as practicing medicine at a hotel on Eddy street, San Francisco, without the formality of obtaining a license, and who could not recall the name of the medical college from which he claims to have graduated, plead guilty December 19, 1925, and on January 9, 1926, was granted two years' probation by Judge Pat Parker in Department 12, San Francisco Superior Court.

Recent press dispatches relate that "Bishop" Helmuth P. Holler, head of the Oriental University, alleged to have issued diplomas in wholesale quantities, was recently found guilty in Washington, D. C., of conspiracy to misuse the mails. It is related that a catalog of the Oriental University is said to show about 700 various degrees were issued; that a medical degree is said to have cost \$100 and could be obtained in six, and sometimes, in three months; a dental degree cost \$75, and a doctor of divinity, \$55; that the faculty met once a month to sign diplomas, and that each member received 25 cents per signature.

A press dispatch dated Washington, D. C., January 9, 1926, relates that "Bishop" Helmuth P. Holler, convicted of operating a fake diploma mill in connection with the Oriental University here, today was sentenced to two years in the penitentiary and fined \$1000." Dr. Robert Adcox and Sam Kaplan, both of whom were prominently mentioned in the national diploma mill expose, defendants with Holler, were each reported as sentenced to forty days in jail.

The St. Louis Star of December 21, 1925, relates that Waldo Briggs, dean and owner of the St. Louis College of Physicians and Surgeons, the charter of which the state is now seeking to cancel, lost in the Circuit Court his fight to retain his license to practice medicine in Missouri. Following the diploma mill activities in which the name of Dr. Briggs and his college were prominently mentioned, the Missouri board, after a hearing, revoked Waldo Briggs' license.

According to press dispatches, an indictment charging Dr. Ray Beaman Horton of Purdy, Missouri, with third degree forgery in connection with the medical diploma mill scandals of Missouri, was quashed December 12, 1925, based upon the defendant's contention "that the indictment did not set forth an offense against the Missouri law." Horton is reported to have been specifically charged with forging the name of a fictitious person to what purported to be a statement of graduation acquired at the Independence (Missouri) High School by Bess Walker Sharp, an applicant for a medical license in the State of Missouri. The judge is reported to have said that the "action Dr. Horton was charged with was morally reprehensible and should be made punishable by law." The recommendation was also made that the matter be referred to the State Board of Health to determine whether Dr. Horton's license should be revoked.

G. M. Closson, reported recently to have plead guilty to a charge of violation of the Medical Practice Act in Los Angeles and to have paid a fine of \$200, developed a new idea in aesculapian finance. He is reported to have solicited life insurance and after his prospect had been examined by the company physician, Closson is alleged to have informed his prospect that he was suffering from some constitutional complaint which Closson could cure for a specified sum. He thereafter supplied his prospect with medicines. One individual complained he had paid Closson \$29 for two bottles of medicine and during the course of treatment paid Closson a total of \$150.

READERS' FORUM

Selected short letters and abstracts from longer communications from readers are published when they remain within the bounds of decorum and law and contribute anything of value. Hereafter the name and address of the writer will be given. A pen name will be published on the author's request, and letters to the editor not intended for publication should be marked "personal."

San Francisco, January 15, 1926.

TO THE EDITOR:

We are enclosing herewith copy of our letter of January 13, addressed to the Fresno Republican, answering the criticism of the Board of Medical Examiners made by Dale Frane, secretary of the Orange Cove Chamber of Commerce, and we are wondering whether you consider this matter important enough to publish in the Journal.

C. B. PINKHAM, M. D.,
Secretary-Treasurer, California Board of
Medical Examiners.

Sacramento, January 13, 1926.

GENTLEMEN:

The Fresno Republican of January 11, 1926, printed a news story wherein it was related that Dale Frane, secretary of the Orange Cove Chamber of Commerce, had scolded the Board of Medical Examiners in a speech he made at the annual meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Commercial Secretaries recently held in Fresno. His unwarranted criticism calls for our reply, and we feel sure that you will give this the same prominence as the news article above referred to, headed "Orange Cove Needs Doctor."

We are charitable enough to assume that Mr. Frane, over-zealous in his enthusiasm as secretary of the Orange Cove Chamber of Commerce and without investigation, made the charges that the Board of Medical Examiners discriminated "in their examinations of applicants . . . from other states and in favor of California graduates from . . . medical colleges," without knowledge that there is no possibility of any examiner knowing the identity of the individual whose paper he is correcting.

Mr. Frane opines that the only chance for Orange Cove "is to attract a doctor already established in the east or middle west but who, because of the desire to come to California, may be content to locate in a small town and grow up with it."

He is evidently unaware that during the past twelve years the California Board has recognized the credentials of over 3860 doctors from the various states in the Union and has granted each of them a license to practice in this state without requiring of them a written examination; yet Orange Cove has been neglected, and the Board of Medical Examiners is censured for this neglect.

Mr. Frane must also be unaware that during the past eleven years over 2000 physicians and surgeons have been admitted to practice in this state after having passed what he terms "examinations so tricky and severe that few of them are able to pass."

Over 5860 doctors have been licensed in California during the past twelve years, and yet Orange Cove is without a doctor.

Some months ago the writer received an appeal from the Orange Cove Chamber of Commerce, urging that we send a doctor to that community. Mr. Frane therein stating that the location is good but exacting that the man be "a good conscientious physician, but who must be a good, up-to-date man and one with a good personality." We have personally referred many applicants to this prospective location, yet but one has elected to "locate in a small town and grow up with it."

Of this pioneer, a recent correspondent relates:

"There was a doctor at Orange Cove about a year ago, and there were not enough people there to support him. He had to move away. . . . The people are well taken care of by the doctors at Dinuba, Reedley, Oris and Cutler. . . ."

Doctors, like other human beings, must earn the wherewithal to live for we know of no charitable organization that will support the doctor who is content to "locate in

a small town and grow up with it," and whose remuneration is not sufficient to pay his living expenses.

Statistics show that the automobile, combined with good roads, are responsible for the rural doctor seeking the larger centers of population, easy of access to suburbanites, practically all of whom now own automobiles.

BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

CHARLES B. PINKHAM, Secretary.

January 15, 1926.

TO THE EDITOR:

For several years past complaints have come to us regarding individuals traveling in pairs who pose as specialists on the eye and through some "hokum" succeed in defrauding individuals of large sums of money, following alleged operations on the eye.

We are enclosing herewith a report of our special agent, dated San Francisco, January 14, relating to two individuals recently apprehended in Fresno County and we believe that this report would furnish interesting reading in CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

C. B. PINKHAM, M. D.,
Secretary Board of Medical Examiners.

With non-essentials eliminated, Mr. Henderson's interesting report says:

DEAR DOCTOR:

On January 7 the above individuals were arrested in Fresno County, were jointly charged with obtaining money by false pretenses, and for violating the Medical Practice Act.

On January 13 both defendants waived a preliminary hearing before Justice of the Peace Holderman in the city of Reedley and were thereafter held to answer to the Superior Court of Fresno County, being remanded into custody for failure to produce bail in the sum of \$5000 cash each.

The arrests grew out of the complaint of Mrs. Emily Howard, who resides near Reedley, who had on January 7 paid the two defendants the sum of \$500 for an alleged "eye operation."

Briefly, the facts of the complete transaction, as related by Mrs. Howard, are that during the month of August, 1925, two individuals called at her home, representing that one of them was an optician and that the other was a physician and that both of them represented the St. Francis Institute at Denver, and after some conversation with her, discovered that she had an affliction of the eyes and after the administration of a remedy to her eyes, which they claimed to contain radium, removed three "films" from each eye, Mrs. Howard describing these "films" as having the appearance of a very thin transparent piece of rubber, \$600 being charged and paid for this "operation."

During the month of November, 1925, two different individuals called upon Mrs. Howard, saying that the purpose of their visit was to determine whether or not the operation performed during the month of August had been successful, saying that the doctor in the last instance was one of the staff of the institute above mentioned, and again, after a very ostentatious examination of Mrs. Howard's eyes, a second operation was performed, at which time two films were taken from each eye and the sum of \$600 paid for this operation.

When the above defendants called upon Mrs. Howard on January 7, they told her practically the same story as did the second pair, namely, that Faircloth was the optician and that Gebhart was a member of the staff of the St. Francis Institute in Denver and that they had been requested by the institute to call upon Mrs. Howard to determine whether or not the two previous operations had been a success and, after the examination made by Gebhart, he informed Mrs. Howard that he regretted to tell her that it had not been successful and that a third operation would be necessary. The operation was thereupon performed and one "film," answering the description of the previous "films," was taken from her left eye, for which the sum of \$500 was paid.

Mrs. Howard is very positive in her statement that six

separate and distinct individuals called upon her, covering the whole transaction. The second two, namely, those who called upon her during the month of November, resemble the descriptions given us by Mrs. Frank Lilyard, Box 3, Oakdale, California, under date of May 28, 1924, in which Mrs. Lilyard relates that both men were of dark complexion, the taller of the two, who was the "doctor," being about forty to forty-five years of age, and the other, the "optician," Mrs. Lilyard states, being considerably younger. In the communication above referred to, Mrs. Lilyard mailed to us the following receipt, dated February 20, 1922:

"Received from Mrs. Lilyard, \$35 in full. L. Edwards."

According to Mrs. Lilyard's communication, the L. Edwards, above referred to, was the "doctor."

These two men are quite likely the individuals referred to in our files as "Pierce" and "Williams," who operated in this community about the same date as referred to by Mrs. Lilyard.

On November 22, 1923, two individuals answering the descriptions furnished us by Mrs. Lilyard, called upon Mrs. Orilla B. Smith in the vicinity of Easton, Fresno County, stating that they represented the St. Francis Institute, Denver, Colorado, and representing themselves as J. Cooper, who was the optician, and Dr. J. B. Peters, who was the physician, and after an alleged operation, removed a "film" from the eye of Mrs. Smith after the use of what they called radium, and for which they charged her the sum of \$487.50. Mrs. Smith made out a check for this amount, payable to Cooper, who took the check in to Fresno for payment, Dr. Peters remaining with Mrs. Smith during Cooper's absence, which was apparently for the purpose of preventing her from giving the matter too serious thought during the absence of Cooper. Cooper returned in a short while with the information that she did not have sufficient funds on deposit in the Bank of Italy, upon which the check was drawn, to cover the amount named, i. e., \$487.50, whereupon Mrs. Smith destroyed the first check, determined the amount of her bank balance, and drew them a check accordingly in the sum of \$300, which was shortly afterwards presented to the bank and paid to Cooper. Attached hereto is a receipt signed "Dr. J. B. Peters," as well as the cancelled check above referred to, bearing endorsement of "J. Cooper."

Official photographs and descriptions of Gebhart and Faircloth have already been forwarded, through the State Identification Bureau, to the sheriffs of the various counties in which these individuals are known to have operated and I have arranged through the Identification Bureau at Fresno to mail to us one dozen photographs of each, showing the official description. It is my purpose to mail to each individual throughout the state, as disclosed by our files to have had dealings with "eye specialists," a photograph and description of Gebhart and Faircloth, with the hope of identifying them as the same individuals who may have worked the same scheme with the persons to whom we send these photographs, as was worked upon Mrs. Howard.

I have had complete statements taken from Mrs. Howard and from Mrs. Orilla B. Smith of Easton, which will be transcribed in the near future, and then made a part of our files.

From the foregoing it is obvious that this scheme is operated by a group of at least six individuals.

H. G. HENDERSON,
Special Agent.

A thin diet is the healthiest for the body. But we ought chiefly to avoid all excess in meat or drink or pleasure when there is any feast or entertainment at hand, or when we expect any royal or princely banquet, or solemnity which we cannot possibly avoid; then ought the body to be light and in readiness to receive the winds and waves it is to meet with.—One of Plutarch's Rules of Health.

Charles Darwin, according to the Dearborn Independent, once took from the foot of a wandering bird a small fragment of earth which, when moistened, and planted, produced no less than eighty plants.